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THE

CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Vol. II.]

FEBRUARY, 1822.

[No. 2.]

For the Churchman's Magazine.

THE COMMENTATOR :

OR

A GUIDE to the clear comprehension, and pious use, of the LITURGY.

No. I.

THE object of the Commentator may be understood from the title which he has prefixed to his remarks, and will be more fully perceived in the progress of his work. Waiving the formality of an introduction, therefore, he will proceed directly to such observations as his object embraces. And as the morning and evening devotions claim his first attention, he will commence with,

"THE ORDER FOR DAILY MORNING PRAYER."

Under the Law, daily morning and evening devotions were enjoined by God, on all the Israelites.—"Thou shalt offer upon the altar two lambs of the first year day by day continually; the one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even." This ordinance was constantly observed by the Jews, during the continuance of their city and polity. It was probably on this account that the primitive christians set apart these periods as times for solemn worship. And like all the divine ordinances their institution is most consonant to reason, and the fitness of things. Every morning

when we awake, we receive, as it were anew, our life from God.—When we arise from our beds, to go forth amidst the cares and temptations of the world, and the dangers and business of the day, nothing can be more reasonable than that we should offer to our merciful Preserver our thanksgivings for his care over us during the unguarded moments of sleep, and for all the blessings he is constantly conferring on us; and that we should supplicate his guidance and protection through the day, as well as his favour and blessing on the work of our hands.—In the evening, too, the same reasons call us to a renewal of the same duties of devotion. Retiring from the labours and vanities of the day, and when our exhausted spirits dispose us to sink down upon our beds in the attitude and image of death, reason requires of us, that as dying men, we should supplicate the pardon of God for our omissions of duty, as well as for our follies and positive transgressions; and that we should again commend ourselves to his protection who never slumbers nor sleeps.

But besides the public devotions of the morning and evening, many of the devout Jews were in the habit of retiring to their closets, in the middle of the day for the purpose of private worship. And we have reason to believe that this custom was adopted by the early Christians. We learn that St. Peter, "went up-

on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour," which corresponds with our noon. And we find that this was a common period of christian worship, in the time of St. Cyprian, and Clement of Alexandria. It was not long after, that the Monks, who professed to be more devout than other Christians, added other hours of stated prayer. These stated periods of daily devotion had increased to seven, in the time of Pope Pelagius the Second, who established them by a decree, and provided offices of devotion for the several "*Canonical hours*."—At the period of the Reformation, our parent Church of England brought back the periods of public worship to the primitive usage, and enjoined only "daily morning and evening prayer."

But though the Church has appointed these two periods of public worship, she does not thereby excuse any of her children from the essential duty of private devotion. Stated periods for retirement to the closet are salutary for all men. We may worship God, indeed, at any period of the day, and in the midst of our business, by short mental ejaculations, but the use of *stated times* for private devotion can not be too highly estimated. Such is the constitution of our nature, that a duty, which we think can be performed at any time, we are apt to defer altogether, unless we regulate our conduct by fixed rules.

In the Cathedral Churches, in England, the regular morning service is constantly performed. But the circumstances of country Parishes will not admit of this daily public worship; nor is it practicable in the Parish Churches of this country. But though the dispersed residences, and the secular avocations of Christians, will not permit them to assemble daily for public worship, none can be excused for the neglect of *Family Devotions*. And the Amer-

ican branch of the Church, has set forth "Forms of Prayer to be used in Families," well suited to their circumstances and their wants.—Those heads of Families, therefore, who live in the habitual neglect of these daily morning and evening devotions, frustrate the benevolent intentions of the Church, and loose one of the most interesting bands of the domestic state; while they are deficient in a duty enjoined not less by the dictates of reason than the authority of Scripture.

The first *Rubrick* in "the order for daily morning prayer" is as follows;—

"¶ *The Minister shall begin the MORNING PRAYER, by reading one or more of the following sentences of Scripture.*"

This Rubrick is somewhat altered from the English Book, and the phraseology is improved, though the substance of it remains the same.

Rubricks are rules or orders directing the mode in which the several parts of public worship are to be performed. They are so called from the latin word *Rubrica*, which signifies a red colouring. For distinction's sake, they were originally written in red letters; and the Rubricks of the Romish Missal, and other offices, are still printed in red characters. It is from this circumstance that they derive their appellation. In all modern editions of the Book of Common Prayer, all the offices, with the exception of the responses, are printed in common letters, while the Rubricks are distinguished by being printed in the Italic character.

Prayer is the elevation of the soul to a communion with God; and is commanded by him as a duty, through the pious and faithful performance of which we obtain all the especial blessings we enjoy. It is a high honour to us that we are permitted and assisted to hold this intercourse, and it is also a source of

inestimable benefits to us. But it is a duty of *difficult performance*. Our attention should be wholly engrossed in the solemn act we are engaged in. The worldly objects which commonly occupy our thoughts must be excluded. Our souls must be suitably humbled under a sense of our unworthiness, and brought to a proper state of serenity by a contemplation of the paternal goodness of God, and the atonement and mediation of the Saviour. Hence it results that some preparation of the mind is necessary before we enter upon the sacred duties of devotion.—It is the custom of the Jews, when they enter their synagogues for worship, to stand silent for some time, to meditate on the presence and perfections of God. And in the early ages of Christianity, it was the custom of the Priest to prepare the people's hearts for worship, by the use of a suitable preface. In imitation of this primitive usage, the Church has prescribed the *sentences* of scripture, the reading of which are enjoined by the foregoing *Rubrick*.

In the first reformed Book composed in the reign of King Edward, the offices of devotion began with the Lord's Prayer. The Romish Book began in the same way, and so does the Liturgy of the Greek Church. But when the next review of the Liturgy was made, this commencement was thought too abrupt. The sentences from scripture were then prefixed, together with the exhortation, confession, and absolution; as a proper introduction, and to prepare the congregation for the following devotions. And while the addition is calculated to serve these salutary purposes, it brings back the Liturgy nearer to the primitive model.

It should seem that nothing can have a stronger tendency to produce in us a pious frame of soul than the voice of God speaking to us. The Church in prescribing these senten-

ces, expects us to regard them as the words of God, addressed to us by the mouth of his ambassador; and she hopes we will not dare to disobey them, since they come from the very Being to whom we are about to address our prayers, and who may justly refuse to regard *our petitions* if we neglect to observe *his commandments*.—"Before thou prayest, prepare thyself" says the son of Sirach: And the scripture sentences are admirably selected to prepare us for the duty of devotion. They relate chiefly to repentance, and confession of sins. These should naturally stand first in the devotion of guilty creatures: For, till we feel a genuine sorrow for having offended God, and come in earnest to seek that pardon which is offered to us through his Son, we cannot expect that he will accept our prayers.

When the Minister begins to repeat the sentences, the congregation *rises*. This is a decent and proper custom. Its import is, to manifest our reverence for the word of God, now addressed to us, in order to awaken us to repentance.

During this part of the service, the Minister should bear in mind that he stands in the place of an Ambassador of Christ, as well as the solemn nature of the duties in which he is about to join with his congregation. He should read the sentences with suitable gravity, with a demeanour expressive of his inward devotion, with collected attention, and with that serious and affectionate tone of voice, that is best calculated to influence the minds and hearts of his people;—to quicken their zeal, and excite in them those heavenly affections which are requisite in prayer. And if such are the duties of the Minister, there are also corresponding obligations on the part of the hearer. During the reading of these sentences, no member of the congregation may stand idle, listless, and inactive, as though he had nothing

Every one is in duty bound to pay a reverent attention to the admonitions of God, thus declared by his ambassador; and in this way to prepare himself to make his confessions to our "Almighty and most merciful Father," in the form provided by the Church.

From this view of the design of the prefatory sentences, it will be perceived that every member of a congregation ought to be in Church in due season, that he may be present at the very beginning of the service, and have time to prepare for the more solemn offices of devotion. Many who appear in their seats previous to the commencement of public worship, are apt to spend the interval in gazing about the Church, to gratify an idle curiosity. But how much more profitably this time might be spent in reading over the whole of the sentences, and such other scriptures as would tend to promote religious meditations; that they might thus bring themselves to such a devout frame of mind before the Minister begins, as to be able to follow him through the successive offices, in such a manner as the nature of the duty requires.

In fine, let every one who hears these divine sentences, be thankful to God for the instruction, the admonition, and the encouragement they afford; And may it be the earnest desire of all, so to use the ordinances of God's house, as not to abuse them; that they may derive from them that comfort through life which they are calculated to afford, and find them as waters of consolation in the day of adversity.

The next thing in the order of the services is the EXHORTATION.—It is introduced by the Rubrick, "*then the Minister shall say*"—

This Rubrick is not immediately prefixed to the Exhortation in the English Prayer Book; but the matter of it is contained there, in the close of the Rubrick which precedes it.

In the performance of the Service it is customary to pronounce only two or three of the sentences, and then to proceed to the exhortation; which is grounded on them, and is little more than a comment or paraphrase upon the several texts.

It is to be feared that there are many who regard this Exhortation as a mere matter of form, and give but little heed to it. But those who will attend to the instruction which it contains, cannot fail to perceive how admirably it is calculated to apply the preceding sentences, and direct us how we should perform the following confession.

The Minister begins his address with the Apostolic Salutation, "*Dear! beloved brethren.*"—These words are well adapted to express that tender regard which the Ministers of God's word should have for their people. And the congregation should be careful to receive their exhortation with a ready mind, since they thus "speak to them the truth in love." After this affectionate address, the Minister proceeds to call his people to confession, by the admonition that "*the Scripture moveth us in sundry places, to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness.*" These words are grounded on the introductory sentences, and particularly on that from 1 John i. 8, 9. But many other passages of scripture might be cited to the same purpose; and to give weight to this admonition, the words import, that it is not merely the Minister, but God himself, who by his holy word moves us to repentance and confession; so that he who refuses to obey, refuses not man but God.—We are further admonished not to "*dissemble or cloke*" our sins. For though we could conceal them so closely as to deceive all the world, yet we can not hide them from that God who "searcheth the heart," and who will condemn us for our hypocrisy as well as for the transgression. We are therefore ad-

monished to "*confess*" our sins, with an "*humble and lowly*" heart, sensible of our unworthiness; with a "*penitent*" heart, filled with sorrow for having offended so good a God; and with an "*obedient*" heart, fully resolved upon reformation and amendment of life.

The object of this confession of our sins, is then declared to be, "*to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same,*" by the "*infinite goodness and mercy*" of God. "If we confess our sins," says St. John, "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Repentance and forgiveness are constantly connected, in the Scriptures; yet we must be careful to regard repentance rather as a *condition*, than as the meritorious *cause*, of our forgiveness; which is to be sought for only in the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ.

We are then instructed that confession and repentance are "*at all times*" our duty, but "*chiefly when we assemble and meet together*" for the purposes of public worship. These purposes are declared to be "*to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at the hands of God;*" which we accordingly do, in the form of thanksgiving prescribed by the Church: "*To set forth his most worthy praise;*" which is done in our Psalms, Hymns, Anthems, and Doxologies: "*To hear his most holy word;*" which we do in attending to the reading of the portions of Scripture, and to the sermons, which are taken from the Scriptures: And lastly, "*to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the Soul;*" which is done in the Collects, Supplications, and Intercessions. But unless true repentance precede these duties and devotions, none of the services will be acceptable to God, or profitable to ourselves.

Wherefore, that the people may not come to Church in vain, the Minister "*prays and beseeches*" them, "*as many as are present,*" to accompany him in the solemn confession which immediately follows—a confession, which there are none so holy but they have need to make it; and none so sinful but they may be profited in using it with sincerity.

Such are the views we ought to take of this comprehensive exhortation. While, therefore, the Minister is addressing it to us, let us apply our minds fully to its import, that we may be prepared to accompany him with contrite hearts in the "*general Confession*" to the Throne of Grace. C.

(To be continued.)



For the Churchman's Magazine.

Holy-Days.

OUR thoughts cannot be too frequently withdrawn from things below, and fixed on things above. The various worldly avocations in which the different members of the Church are necessarily engaged, have very often but too great a tendency to prevent many of them from holding that close and constant communion with God, which the spirit as well as the letter of the Gospel requires. And not only have their secular employments this unfavourable tendency, but it is also much to be feared, that in not a few cases they actually succeed in banishing that habitual godliness of conversation, by which the followers of Christ should ever be distinguished. The continual and uninterrupted round of worldly cares and pleasures, by which six-sevenths of their time is swallowed up, leaves them, we may well suppose, in a frame of mind ill adapted to worship God, on his holy Sabbaths, "*in spirit and in truth.*" For man

is so constituted, that his heart is apt to be fixed chiefly on those objects which his mind is most in the habit of contemplating with complacency or pleasure. So that if God be the principal and oft-recurring subject of his meditations, he will "grow in grace as he grows in age;" he will daily see more and more of the loveliness of the Divine Character, and earnestly seek the highest degree of conformity to it: trusting wholly in his God, he will go on from righteousness to righteousness, setting his heart and affections upon Him as the infinite Source of all his present joys, and as the firm rock and foundation of all his hopes. But if, on the other hand, the increase of worldly wealth, or the enjoyment of the various pleasures which wealth and society afford, is allowed to engross the greater part of his time and attention, will not his heart almost unavoidably become alienated from God? Will it not be so filled with earthly schemes and cares, as to be utterly unfit for, and consequently to exclude the residence of that Being who can never dwell in a divided heart,—who hath so often enjoined upon those who would experience his favor, that they must "love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind?" Persons who have thus spent all the week, or six days out of seven, in exclusive devotion to secular concerns, without having afforded even an hour to serious meditation, and communion with the Father of Spirits, will on the Lord's day come to the place of His public worship, with minds but poorly prepared to engage in his service, or to receive his blessing. That there are many persons of this description, who persuade themselves that it is enough to serve God one day in seven, and that after having made him an offer of their hearts on that day, they may during the week withhold

them from him, and live as if there were no God, or as if they were totally regardless of their solemn dedication of themselves to his service, to walk in the same all the days of their lives; that there are such we may reasonably presume. But who are included in this unhappy class, is known to Him who searcheth the heart. Let each man's conscience, after a close scrutiny, answer for himself.

Such being the repugnance between spiritual and worldly affairs, and a deep immersion in the latter having such a strong tendency to destroy all relish for the former; and, moreover, seeing that Christians must of necessity mingle more or less with the world, and thus stand exposed to its temptations; it is manifest that that mode of conduct and worship is best, which is best calculated to keep God in our minds, to prevent us from imbibing the spirit of this world, and secure us from being overcome by its temptations. And although it is true, that unless we receive and cherish the grace of God in our hearts, all the modes which could be devised, and the utmost frequency of public worship would avail us nothing; yet on the other hand it must also be acknowledged; that some modes are far preferable to others, inasmuch as they are far more grave and reverent, tending as well to impress the unrepentant sinner with awe and conviction, as to preserve in the minds of the faithful a due sense of the infinite superiority, majesty and goodness of that Being, on whom they profess their humble dependence. And it is evident, that the more frequently the followers of Jesus assemble together in solemn worship, whether for the purpose of humbling themselves before God, in deep contrition for their sins, or with a design to raise the cheerful song of thanksgiving and praise, to show forth the joy and gratitude of

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their souls "for the great benefits which they have received at His hands;" the more will their minds consequently be withdrawn from the world, and directed towards the Saviour, in whose name and in whose presence they assemble.

From the above remarks it may appear, that it is the duty of the Church to invite the attention of her members, as often as practicable, from their secular to their spiritual and eternal concerns. Not only should those who are still unrepentant and without her jurisdiction, be frequently admonished of their danger, pointed to the path of safety, and entreated to flee from the wrath to come; but those also, who have already entered upon the christian course, should be often reminded of the sacred character which they have assumed, exhorted to maintain its dignity unsullied, to be steadfast and immovable in the faith, to carefully cultivate every christian grace and constantly practise every christian virtue, and with all diligence to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Duly impressed with a sense of her duty in this respect; and convinced of the great utility of frequent meetings for social worship, our church, in imitation of the primitive christians, has very wisely set apart and consecrated particular seasons to the worship of God. These seasons, besides the Sundays, are thirty-six festival and fast days to be observed in the course of the year; for each of which there is an appropriate service provided in our Liturgy. On these holy-days we are called to the sanctuary, to offer up unto God, as his just due, the frequent sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; or to bewail our sins and deprecate his wrath; and with united prayers and supplications to make known unto Him our wants. Although the observation of these days is not expressly enjoined in the

New Testament, yet we find them there frequently referred to, and implicitly allowed. And that they are requisite in the Church, may appear not only from their reasonableness and utility, but also from the universal practice of the Jews and Pagans, as well as of the Christian Church in its infancy. The Jews had a considerable number of festivals and fasts, some of which were of divine, and others of ecclesiastical appointment. To pass over the worship of the pagans, whom nature itself taught the advantage and necessity of such days, to revive and keep alive the flame of devotion; we find that the Great Head of the Church fasted while upon earth, and honoured one of the Jewish festivals with his presence. Fasting is mentioned as a duty by our Saviour; and it may be seen by various passages in the New Testament, that the Apostles considered it a duty of believers, and not only recommended, but were themselves very frequent in the practice of it. Festival days in commemoration of the *Resurrection* and *Ascension* of Christ, and of other principal events which, under God, were the sources of great blessings to the Church, were annually and strictly observed by the primitive christians. And although we have no positive divine precept for the observation of any other days than the holy Sabbaths, yet this universal practice of the Church in all ages, is a precedent which sufficiently sanctions our own, and which we are bound to follow. For as in human or civil law, so in ecclesiastical, long established customs, or customs "to which the memory of man runneth not contrary," and which are consonant with reason and with the law of God, and more especially if they evidently tend to the temporal benefit, or to the moral and spiritual melioration of mankind, are themselves allowed to become laws, and to have, not indeed

the same importance and force as divine injunctions, but all that expediency and human authority can impart to them. And since God has not revealed to us his will in this respect, he has left the number and the selection of these festival and penitential seasons, to the good sense and discretionary power of his Church. By the reasonable determination of this Church, we are to abide; for we are commanded by the Apostle to obey those who have rule over us, those who are placed over us in the Lord. So that they who wilfully neglect the holy-days, which the Church has ordered to be set apart and dedicated to the solemn worship of Almighty God, not only offend their brethren, and cause disturbance in the Church by transgressing her canons; but it may justly be feared, that they also incur the awful displeasure of the King of Kings, whom they neglect to honor, and the reasonable requirements of whose Church and the instruction of whose ministers, they thus treat with a criminal disregard.

I will conclude the present essay by seriously proposing a single question, which in my judgment, involves a subject of no small importance:—Do the various Episcopal churches in the United States, pay a due regard to our Ecclesiastical Polity, particularly to that part of it which relates to the observation of Festivals and Fasts?

In a future Number it is my intention to continue these remarks.

LATIMER.

New-Haven, January, 1822.



For the Churchman's Magazine.

On certain abuses of the Ministerial office.

AMONG the evils resulting from the prevalence of loose and indefi-

nite notions with regard to the constitution and organization of the Christian Ministry, none perhaps is more to be deprecated, than the frequent introduction into religious communities of shoals of self-taught, self-appointed, and self-sent preachers. It is not uncommon to see, in the public newspapers, an advertisement, informing the people, that at such a time and place, the *Reverend* Mr. Such-an-one, will deliver a sermon or lecture: And it often happens, that a puff is attached to the notification in a style sufficiently gross to put even a strolling-player or a mountebank to the blush.—Well—the title of *reverend*, or the puff, or the novelty, will of course attract the attention and curiosity of the multitude, and away they will go, men, women, and children, gentle and simple, to hear the man *preach*. On such occasions it is usual for the preacher to attempt, either directly or indirectly, to destroy the confidence which the people repose in their regularly settled pastors. The manner of effecting this, depends entirely on the modesty of the preacher. Sometimes he will begin, by insinuating that they are ignorant or designing—that they either misunderstand the scriptures, or wilfully misrepresent them—that they hold up needless and unauthorized terror to their hearers, for the purpose of blinding their understanding, and keeping them in subjection—and much more in the same style. Sometimes he will assert, that the received translation of the scriptures is very erroneous—that it was made in a time of great ignorance and darkness—that the translators were fanatical and puritanical men, whose notions of present duty and future responsibility, were by far too rigid—and that it is high time to view religion in a more liberal and rational sense. Again, he will declare, that there is nothing in the original text, to support the

doctrine of the Trinity, or of the divine nature of the Saviour, or of the atonement of Christ—and that every passage of this kind, has been either interpolated or mistranslated by wicked and designing men. I mention these, as some of the modes of attack. To mention them all, would not only be difficult, but unnecessary. The object is, to persuade the people that they are deceived by their pastors. And how often does it happen, that bold assertions, an insinuating address, or insidious appeals to the passions, are but too successful! How often is the salutary influence of the regular pastors destroyed—the peace of religious communities disturbed—and discord and confusion introduced, where nothing but love and harmony should reign! And what, in cases of this nature, can the pastors do? If they, perceiving the young lambs of their flocks, credulously listening to these insinuations and assertions, and drinking in the poison of heresy and infidelity, take the alarm and venture to stand forth in defence of their conduct and their principles, a hue and cry is raised by a certain class of the community, and they are stigmatized as bigots, and as the abettors of priestcraft and spiritual tyranny.

Now, I doubt not that every pious or sober man in the community will admit, that this is a great evil. Why, then, will not men of this description, resort to the only remedy, which appears to hold out the hope of proving effectual? Let every person who feels an interest in this concern, endeavour to obtain correct views of the Christian ministry, and of the sacerdotal office. Let the profession be held sacred; and let no man be received and accredited as an ambassador of Christ, who does not come clothed with due authority, and who does not acknowledge some legitimate head and fountain of power, by means of which,

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suitable checks are provided, and control and discipline faithfully administered. Let this be done, and we may rest assured, that we shall not see such numbers flocking to witness the exhibitions of preachers, who put themselves on a footing with strolling-players and mountebanks; or we may at least flatter ourselves, that we shall not see them surrounded by sober men, and orderly Christians, and reputable ladies.

If the pretensions of these men were duly examined, I verily believe, that in nine cases out of ten, it would be found, that they had not passed through even the lowest forms of an ordination; and that some of them, possessed so little of the confidence of their fellow-men, that they never would have thought of attempting to preach, where they were known. In other cases, they may hold a license to preach, obtained from some small *congregation*, in some obscure spot, in some remote corner of the earth: And fortified with this, they go forth, advertise themselves as *reverend* divines, and affect to preach the gospel—while they are labouring to overturn its very foundations!

Is the sacred profession, then, of so little consequence? Is it of less dignity than the other liberal professions? When strolling self-styled doctors advertise their quackeries, the civil authority interposes. Why so? The worst *they* can do, is to tamper with the health, and kill the body. But spiritual quackery may destroy the soul. Further, I believe it is a rule of courts of justice, that no person may appear as the advocate of a client, without a regular license *from the court*—(not from *the people*.) Suppose, then, that a person should appear in a court of Justice, and offer his services as an advocate, and should produce as his authority, a certificate, stating, that in such a town, on such a day, at a

a meeting lawfully convened, it was voted, that Mr. ——— might exercise the office of an attorney at law? I trust he could not be admitted to the bar—even though his name should be graced with the appendage of *Esquire*. But, it would seem, that a meeting, lawfully or unlawfully convened, may appoint a man to preach the gospel of salvation, and to plead for sinners against the great adversary of souls;—and that they may send him out, to execute his office, without the least responsibility—without any security, either for the soundness of his doctrine, or the correctness of his conduct—without any regard to what he preaches or what he practices.

I know, Messrs. Editors, that your Church is provided with some excellent regulations with regard to these matters; and that, were your regimen universally adopted, and your people a little more careful to abstain from running after these self-made preachers, the evil of which I complain, could not exist. I do hope, therefore, that other orthodox denominations will, by approximating, as nearly as possible, to your system, and by standing aloof from preaching of this description, check, if not entirely eradicate, this dangerous quackery.

O. P. Q.

For the Churchman's Magazine.

ON HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

Observations on Human Depravity with a view to the illustration of Gen. vi. 5.

Few subjects are more interesting, than the fall of our first parents from that state of innocence, perfection, and happiness, in which they were originally placed by their Creator. By their rebellion against God, they brought upon their

posterity that corruption, from which their guilt and misery originate. From this corruption of nature, sometimes denominated "original sin," none of their descendants have been entirely exempt. It is not my intention to inquire how far mankind "are gone from original righteousness," nor into the precise extent to which their moral and intellectual powers are depraved.—While the depravity of human nature cannot be denied, it must be acknowledged to be so extensive, as to render us naturally opposed to God and holiness, and wherever a proper sense of it is entertained, to mortify and humble the pride of our hearts.

Without enquiring into the precise extent of human depravity, it may be remarked that it has always been capable of great melioration, through the influence of that divine Spirit, which God has been graciously pleased to bestow upon mankind. For the truth of this, I might appeal to the interesting and illustrious examples of the patriarchs and prophets and holy men of former dispensations; of the noble army of Christian martyrs, and "of the general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." To render human depravity susceptible of this melioration, and, by bringing mankind back to the service and favour of God, to qualify them for a blessed immortality, was the errand of love, on which our divine Redeemer came into the world.

If the depravity of human nature may be, in a great measure corrected; by perverseness and folly, by the gratification of the desires and passions, by following the temptations to evil which constantly surround us, it may be greatly increased, and its effects become more and more malignant and ruinous. The pages of both sacred and profane history, contain innumerable exam-

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ples of this terrible increase in depravity and wickedness. By these examples we are enabled to trace the progress of human corruption, to point out how our depraved passions gather strength by indulgence, and to mark distinctly the several stages by which men advance in the path of sin and death, till they ultimately arrive at a total indifference to God, religion, and the dearest interests of their immortal souls, and become *totally* alienated from the fountain of all goodness, servants of sin and satan. By this dreadful progress in depravity, many have, at last, been brought into that state of mind, when "all the imaginations of the thoughts of their heart, were only evil continually;" when God himself, withdrawing his grace from them, gave them over "to a reprobate mind."

It would be impossible to point out precisely, the extent of that depravity to which our first parents were reduced by their disobedience. Nor is it material to our present purpose, to determine whether it was partial, or total. Immediately after the fall, they were without a Redeemer, and without any hope of deliverance from that wrath which they had provoked. Their state was that of condemnation,—the penalty or curse of the law resting upon them in its full force. But it would seem that their continuance in this state was of short duration. The promise of a Redeemer appears to have been made, soon after the fall; and it is reasonable to conclude, that they fixed their faith and rested their hopes upon this promise, and on these terms were restored to divine favour. The promise, comprehending the infinite sufficiency of that atonement which the Son of God would make in the fullness of time, undoubtedly took immediate effect, and was regarded by the wise and good in subsequent generations, as the ground on which they were

to expect pardon and restoration to life. On this account, it would not be correct to consider mankind, in reference to their spiritual condition as descendants of our first parents, to be without a Redeemer, and uninterested in the benefits which that Redeemer purchased for our fallen race. In discussing the extent of their depravity, we are not to form our estimate by our ideas of what man is, or *would be without a Redeemer*, but from those moral and religious powers which every man possesses, by those gifts of grace bestowed upon every one, through the mediation of our divine Redeemer. If it were acknowledged that human nature, in consequence of the first transgression, and before any interposition of mercy had been announced, was totally depraved, it would not follow that it was now in the same condition until conversion has taken place. It would derogate from the character of the interposition of the Son of God, to suppose that it did not bestow upon mankind, an ability to obtain the benefit which it contemplated; an ability not dependent on their own natural powers, but on the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Great as the degree of human depravity may be, even under these circumstances, it is evidently capable of increase, by neglecting to improve the benefits purchased for mankind generally, and by pursuing a course of sin, until every expression of the divine favour is withdrawn. Gen. vi. 5, "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" is a description, not of mankind generally, but of that antediluvian generation of men, who had added to that corrupt nature, which of itself, made them "by nature the children of wrath," a weight of guilt which had been accumulating for years, by a constant forgetfulness of God, by the unrestrained gratification of their

passions and lusts, and by engaging all their powers and faculties in the pursuit of iniquity. It was in consequence of this awful progress in corruption, that God himself interposed and shortened the period of their life; and gave as a reason for it, that his "spirit should not always strive with man." But even this had no effect in retarding the progress of their crimes, and their increase in depravity. For we are told, not long after this, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." This is a description of a generation of men, who had become depraved to the highest degree; an example of the progress which human folly often makes in aggravating our natural corruption, and of the consequence of habitual and unrestrained gratification of our natural propensities. They had renounced their allegiance to the author of their being. They had cast off all the restraints, and contemned all the sanctions of religion. Their hearts had become absolutely hardened in wickedness. God ceased to regard them with favour, and withdrew from them the direction and assistance of his spirit. The consequence of this was, that "the thoughts and intentions of their heart were only evil continually," and the passage therefore cannot be considered, in its appropriate sense, as descriptive of the general depravity of human nature. It has sometimes been urged in proof of the doctrine of total depravity, but it is evident, that it cannot be properly applied to the moral state and character of mankind generally. It was designed to apply only to that generation of men, who, having abandoned their God, were given over to a reprobate mind, and having filled up the measure of their iniquity were destroyed by the deluge. It is

manifest therefore, that Gen. vi. 5. rather militates, than otherwise against the doctrine which it has, sometimes, been thought to support. For a being already totally depraved, cannot be considered as capable of advancing in depravity.

The persons who believe in the doctrine, that human nature is totally depraved, consider mankind, not only in a fallen condition but in that condition without a Redeemer. If Jesus Christ tasted death for every man; if he be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, if he be the light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and if the grace of God have appeared unto all men, then mankind are evidently in a state of redemption. And if they be not benefited, by being placed in this state through the mercy and goodness of God, it is owing to their preferring to follow the inclinations of their depraved nature, rather, than the improvement of the privileges with which they are blessed. There have been a thousand idle speculations on the state of man without a redeemer. These, however, have for the most part turned on illusions of fancy, which have served only to increase difficulties, and to envelope the subject in thicker darkness. The scriptures certainly represent all men to be placed in a state of redemption, and accountable for their improvement of its privileges; and they consider none as destitute of these privileges, except such only as totally disregard the injunctions of the divine word, do constant despite to the spirit of grace, and deny the Lord that bought them.

The words, total depravity, are used to express a doctrine in reference to human nature, which though it be taught in some confessions of faith and has long been a prominent subject of theological controversy, has, I am persuaded, little more, generally speaking, than a nominal existence even in the minds of those

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who assert it. The controversies, among Christians, who have been denominated orthodox, on all the leading doctrines of Christianity, on this subject, have originated in most instances, rather in a confusion of ideas and an indistinctness in terms and definitions, than from any material difference of sentiment. Were the scriptures to be the only ground of opinion, and were definite ideas to be formed on this subject, and were the meaning of the terms employed, clearly understood, it would be found that the denominations of Christians to which I have alluded, agree in the doctrine of the 9th article of the Church. "It is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit," in so much that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God—"And therefore in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." This was the doctrine maintained by the primitive Church. It was the doctrine of the great body of the reformers. It is the express language of our own Church, and it is substantiated by the most positive declarations of holy scripture. The article of the Church asserts the fact that human nature is greatly depraved; the effect of this fault and corruption of our nature upon the exertion of our moral and intellectual powers in the business of religion; and what this depravation of nature deserves from God, without attempting to define its precise extent, or declaring that it is equal and total in all, which is contradicted by observation and experience.

The consideration of this subject should teach us humility and meekness in the estimate of ourselves, and the absolute necessity of improving

the privileges and blessings bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ. Having these privileges and blessings, all that is contended for, is that we are at all times enabled to improve them to the salvation of the soul. If our nature be depraved and sinful, it must be changed and sanctified before we can approve ourselves to a God of infinite purity and holiness, and be prepared for that "rest which is eternal in the heavens." B. D.

For the Churchman's Magazine.

A short Address delivered at the close of a sermon, at the funeral of Dr William Shelton, of Huntington, August 30th, 1819. By the Rev. Menzies Rayner, Rector of the Episcopal Church in that town.

A few observations, more particularly adapted to the present melancholy scene, may probably be expected. They must be few; and few only, if any, can be necessary. The affecting occasion of our assembling together, and the mournful spectacle before us, speak to us with an eloquence of which human language is incapable. We are here made acquainted with our mortal and perishing state upon earth, not by the hearing of the ear, by distant reports, or laboured descriptions, but with our own eyes we behold—we see for ourselves and not another; we survey and handle the cold remains of a fellow-creature which but a few days since was animated with life and health, and was active and vigorous as any of us. And in this mournful and impressive view, our own mortality and frailty, the uncertainty, and the perishing nature of all earthly enjoyments and prospects, is inculcated with an energy and pathos, which words cannot convey.

Surely man, in his best estate upon earth is altogether vanity. In what age or condition, and under what circumstances, can we view ourselves secure for a day or an hour? If feeble infancy, or decrepit old age, were the only subjects of arrest, or if an equal temperament, and a firm constitution were exempt from diseases, and caution could always guard against sudden accidents and disasters, then some at least for a time, might view themselves secure. Or if the measure of our days were revealed to us, and we were certified, as the Psalmist says, *how long we have to live*, then might some, with more propriety, dismiss for a season, the thoughts of futurity. *But man knoweth not his time.* The hour of our dissolution, is a secret written in that book which the Lamb alone has a right to open. It is wisely and mercifully concealed from us, that carelessness and negligence might have no excuse, and that, as our Saviour says, *knowing not when the time is, we might watch and be always ready.*—*In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.* Death generally comes unexpected, and often very suddenly, leaving but little time for serious reflection and calling upon God. And although sincere penitence, even at a very late hour, will be mercifully accepted, yet we ought to be sensible that our everlasting salvation is too important to be put at hazard by any delay. *O that we were wise, that we understood this, that we would consider our latter end.* So teach us, O Lord, to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

A friend and acquaintance, very generally esteemed and beloved, is removed from us. He who so often, through the divine blessing, administered relief to others, in sickness and distress, notwithstanding the most assiduous attention of his brethren of

the healing art, and others who anxiously watched with, and carefully administered to him has fallen a victim to disease and death. Great is the loss which the faculty have sustained; great is the loss to the town in which his skill and his labours have been so successfully employed. The religious society also in this place, to which he belonged, and to which he was most sincerely attached, must be sensible that it has lost in the deceased, one of its most active, efficient and useful members. With what anxiety has he watched and aided the progress of this building, erected for the worship of the God of his Fathers!

My Brethren and Parishioners, let me urge you on this occasion, now when a leading member of your society is removed from among you, let me earnestly call upon you to renew your exertions, and to double your zeal and diligence for the promotion and prosperity of this Church and parish, which lay so near the heart of our deceased Friend. The cause of the Church, the cause of Christ, is worthy of all your zeal, and all your solicitude, of all your prayers, and all your exertions.—Lord, God Almighty help us, *for vain is the help of man.* Our hope standeth in the name of the Lord.—*God will help us, and that soon; the Lord will visit us, and that right early.*

But this afflictive dispensation of divine providence, can by none be so sensibly and tenderly felt, as by the bereaved family and connections of the deceased. His virtues and his worth in all the domestic and endearing relations of life, are too well known, too deeply engraven on the hearts of those to whom he sustained those tender relations, to need any tribute or encomium which I could bestow. He, was, perhaps, as much as most men, whatever is or ought to be implied in the names of Husband, Father, Child, and

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Brother. But these tender relations are all dissolved at a stroke. We shall meet him no more in this world. We shall go to him, but he shall not return to us. The hope that he has made his exit in peace, is a consolation which we have a right to call in to our aid in this time of our deep distress. His penitence and prayers, and the prayers of others, we trust have been graciously regarded. In the hands of a merciful God and Saviour let us leave him, in humble hope and confidence. And let us, my mourning friends, earnestly pray that we may possess the disposition to say, *The will of the Lord be done. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* And let the reflection that God is infinitely wise and good in all his dealings with us, and in all the dispensations of his providence, moderate our grief, and lead us to resign ourselves in all things to the divine disposal. So will God overrule all his dispensations for our good; he will be our guide through all the vicissitudes of this mortal life, and finally receive us to the joys of his eternal rest, "where, with all those who have departed hence in the true faith of his holy name, we shall receive our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in his eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

For the Churchman's Magazine.

Memoirs of the late Rev. JOHN BEACH, Missionary from the Society in Great Britain, "for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts:" also, of the late Rev. PHILO PERRY: connected with an historical sketch of Trinity Church, Newtown, Connecticut, organized in A. D. 1733.

THE brevity of the following me-

moirs, and the want of precision in the details, with the abrupt manner of closing some parts of the narrative, and the want of order in introducing others,—must be attributed in a great measure to the loss of nearly all the original records, letters, &c. concerning Mr. Beach. A sketch of his life was nearly completed for the press in 1810, and was transferred, with a number of his controversial pamphlets, to Mr. Lazarus Beach, his grand-son, then a printer at the city of Washington. Mr. Beach, returning to New-York the next year, put these with other valuable manuscripts, into a trunk on board of a vessel for that place. On his arrival the trunk was not to be found, and has not been heard of since. In addition to this severe loss, most of the parishioners of that excellent man have followed him "to that world from whose bourne no traveller returns." The few who continue, with the writer have endeavored to rescue from oblivion the following facts, for the truth of which they can safely vouch.

Mr. JOHN BEACH, son of William Beach, of Stratford, was born in the year 1698. His father, a respectable farmer, was anxious to bring up his sons as "tillers of the ground:" but more anxious to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—His godly counsels and pious examples, through the blessing of God, led his family at an early period, to an earnest attention to the scriptures and other means of religious improvement. John, in particular, frequently enquired into the historical parts of the Bible, its chronology, and the meaning of terms not in common use, with such obscure passages as he found beyond his comprehension; and not being satisfied with the answers he received, he had recourse to geography and profane history. On finding that the Bible, (for, after all, this to him was the book of all books) was writ-

ten at different times, by different persons, and in different languages, he became extremely anxious to understand those languages. He daily (in the phraseology of that age) expressed his desire to *go to College*. And his parents, observing his attachment to, and increasing thirst for, knowledge, and his frequent custom of being alone, exercised in reading and prayer, while others of his age were pursuing their juvenile diversions, were finally prevailed upon to give him the advantage of a public education. To this measure they were advised by their friends, and especially by the Rev. Timothy Cutler, who had been ten years their minister, and was the most celebrated preacher in the Colony.* He was at this time the Rector elect of Yale College, and gave assurance of his personal and particular attention to their son. Accordingly, after spending about eighteen months with a private instructor, he was sent six months to a grammar school, and then entered the freshmen class, in 1720, in the 20th year of his age. He made good proficiency in learning, and laid the foundation for the superiour knowledge he afterwards acquired in that language, in which the scriptures of the Old Testament were originally written. Without the least stain upon his reputation, he received the honors of Yale College; and took his degree of master of arts in the year 1724; and, as says Dr. Mansfield, in his funeral sermon, "that truly useful seminary of learning may well esteem it an

* For the character and talents of the three distinguished men, CUTLER, JOHNSON, and BROWN, who first dared to rise above the vulgar prejudice of that puritanic age, together with a brief history of the rise and establishment of Primitive Truth and Order in this state—the reader is referred to that interesting work, the life of Dr. JOHNSON, written by Dr. CHANDLER, and published in New-York, under the eye of Bishop HOBART, in 1805.

honor to have produced such an able and eminent son."

His early years being strongly marked with piety and virtue, he was immediately inclined to the study of the sacred science, in which he made such proficiency, as to raise high expectations of his future success—expectations, which were fully realized by the eminent manner in which he discharged the duties of his important office.

At this period of his life, the public mind was deeply agitated upon the validity of presbyterian ordination, and on the use of a Liturgy or a prescribed form of prayer in public worship. The controversy commenced in 1718, in the college then just established at New-Haven.—That institution having recently received a large donation of books, among which were the works of Doctors Barrow, Patrick, South, Tillotson, Sharp, Wilson, and Sherlock, the then Rector, Dr. Cutler, and the tutors Johnson and Brown, three (says a writer of that age) of the most distinguished men in the colony, for clearness of intellect, and excellency in science, theology, and the moral and Christian virtues, eagerly embraced the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the science and divinity of these great, pious and learned writers: the consequence of which was, that they soon declared for the Church of England. After a number of public disputations, before the corporation of the College, and other learned divines of the congregational order, and having triumphed in every interview, they, in the true spirit of Christian meekness, gave up their offices in the institution, and repaired to England for Holy Orders. They were received with paternal fondness, and embraced in the bonds of christian charity. Having been admitted, according to the gospel institution of the church, first to the order of deacons, and then to that

such an able preparation to return, Mr. Brown took the small pox and died, to the no small grief of his brethren and friends. Messrs. Cutler and Johnson arrived at Boston in November, 1723; and the latter, settling at Stratford, became personally and particularly acquainted with Mr. Beach, who had then just received his degree of A. B.

Mr. Beach, during his collegiate studies, had not been an idle spectator of the changes and controversies, that seemed to shake to the centre, not only the Saybrook Platform, but the destinies of the hierarchy of both presbyterian and congregational establishments. Neither was Mr. Beach negligent, at this period, carefully to read and inwardly digest the subject. But the restless spirit, that brought one of the best of kings to the scaffold—that overthrew the throne and the altar in 1642—was busily running to and fro; and the partakers of that spirit, having failed to subdue the citadel, employed themselves in assailing the outworks. Finding episcopacy beyond their reach, they joined the accuser of the brethren, and slandered the professors of the Church, as destitute of piety, and stigmatized the “ceremonies and liturgy of the Church, as rags of Popery and Pagan mummery.”*

Notwithstanding repeated conversations with Mr. Johnson, these publications, with the urgent solicitations of his family and friends, had great influence with Mr. Beach; and he finally yielded, expressing himself in the following manner:—“Having studied the controversy with the best helps I could get, though I had some doubts about the

lawfulness of *presbyterian* ordination (so called) yet my doubts about the lawfulness of clerical *conformity* in the Church of England, were stronger.”* He accordingly was called, and without a dissenting voice, was settled over the congregational society in *Newtown*. This society was then in a very flourishing and prosperous situation; and although the town had been settled but about thirty years, it appears that there were about sixty families, principally from Old Milford, and with few exceptions, of the *new school*, or followers of the Geneva reformer. Mr. Beach was uncommonly successful. Very different from young preachers in general, he avoided all controversies, and knew nothing among his people, but “Christ and him crucified.” The congregation increased in piety, harmony, and love.

The few exceptions noticed above, were five families, viz. John Glover, Benjamin Glover, and Henry Glover, three brothers from New-Haven; Nathaniel Nichols, from Stratford; and a Mr. Leavenworth. These frequently met in a private house for worship, agreeably to the forms of the Church, and for religious conversation. They soon organized, and were visited once in three months by the Rev. Mr. Johnson, of Stratford; who often called on his young friend Mr. Beach, at his own request, and they mutually agreed, from time to time, to discuss the interesting questions in dispute between the Church of England and the dissenters: “And,” said an old man to the writer of this—“they were nearly matched; but Mr. Johnson would generally get the better of our minister, which gave much uneasiness to my father and others, who all believed that Mr. Beach not only had truth on his side, but was (as they expressed it) the best reasoner.—

* See Delaunes’ Plea for the Nonconformist, published at that period, with several abusive pamphlets, similar to the modern attack on the Church, entitled “A Serious Call,” by a “Consistant Churchman.”

* Friendly Expostulation, page 10.

However, they finally imputed his failure to his modesty, as being the youngest. But in two or three years, their uneasiness increased into an alarm. They noticed Mr. Beach frequently using the Lord's Prayer, and reading whole chapters from the Bible; also repeating some sentences in his prayers, which the Church people said were taken from the Book of Common Prayer. And what (continued the old gentleman) still more confirmed the congregation, that Mr. Beach was inclining to popery,* was a request he made to his people, not to rise and bow to him when he came into the meeting-house,† but *worship God*—saying, at the same time that *worship* signified kneeling and prostration, and that we were told by the apostle, that *to Jesus every knee shall bow*. Soon after this, my father and others, found that church people bowed at the name of Jesus, when repeating the creed. This, they said, was *rank popery*; and that Mr. Beach was poisoned by Mr. Johnson, and the books which he brought up from Stratford for him and the church

* Popery and Episcopacy, with the dissenters of that age, were synonymous terms.

† In the first settlement of New-England, the preachers introduced the practice of having their congregations rise as they entered the *meeting-house*.—The writer of this, well remembers this custom, which is still adhered to in some societies. The males and females being separate, the one on the left and the other on the right, the moment the minister entered the *broad aisle*, the whole congregation rose as one. The minister, with a slow and solemn pace proceeding up the aisle, inclined his head first to the ladies, and then to the gentlemen. After entering his pulpit, *all standing*, he first bowed to the young ladies, who returned the compliment by a decent *courtesy*; then he turned to the young gentleman, and bowed to them, they also repaying the compliment.—This practice Mr. Beach requested to be discontinued; and strange as it may appear, he was still charged with leaning to popery!!!

people to read. My mother said she had no doubt Mr. Beach would turn churchman; for she never knew any body who would keep reading church-books, but what always did. But Mr. Beach, with his usual good nature, pious example, fervent devotion, and powerful preaching, satisfied all parties that he was honest in his inquiries, and was seeking his own salvation and that of those committed to his charge. But not long after, in repeating our catechism, it was noticed that Mr. Beach occasionally omitted the question, *What are the decrees of God?* Being asked the reason, he replied that he did not believe that *God was the author of sin*—which the answer, in his opinion, necessarily implied. For if God, *for his own glory, foreordained whatsoever comes to pass*—and if sin does daily come to pass—he could not perceive why *God was not the author*. To this it was replied—‘God is not the author of sin; because it is not God’s decree that gives *birth* to sin, but God’s executing his decree: For (it was added) it is not our purpose, but our acting according to our purpose which gives birth to the event.’ To this Mr. Beach answered—‘Suppose I should decree, purpose and resolve, to murder my neighbor—what though it be not my decree or resolution that murders him—yet I execute this my purpose and decree, as God always does his decree—am I not then really as guilty of murder as if my purpose and decree had murdered him? Besides, if we should admit your distinction as real and solid, that God is not the *author of sin*, yet you do not clear him from being the *willer, lover, and approver*, of all sin. For supposing the decree does not influence the event, or give *birth* to sin—no, nor God himself, while he executeth his decrees—yet, for as much as God’s decrees are *according to the counsel*

* Friendly Expostulation, page 25.

other said each would never know. I rep reading always did usual good fervent devotion, satisfying, as honest in seeking his those com But not long catechism, Beach occasion, What Being asked that he did the author ver, in his lied. For ry, foreor s to pass e to pass— y God wa it was re author o od's decre God's ex (it was ad e, but ou purpose e event." ed—'Sup purpose and neighbor— decree of him—yet e and de his decre e guilty o and decre ides, if we ion as re ot the au clear him r, and ap supposing uence the —no, nor cuteth his as God's e counsel

of his own will, and what he decreed he willed and chose that it should be, therefore if I once admit that God decreed that sin should be committed, how is it possible for me at the same time to avoid believing, that he does approve of all wickedness that is committed, and is pleased with it? What then has become of the holiness of God? And how shall I repent and be troubled when I have done wickedly? For I must conclude, that I have done nothing but what God, from all eternity, chose, willed and decreed that I should do. And if so, every body must know, that he who wills the commission of sin, although he never moves a finger towards the wicked action, is as culpable as he who doeth the act. That father, who willet that his children shall lie and steal, though he never in any shape influenceth them to it, nor lets them know his inclination, yet is as bad as they who do it of their own accord. Merely the mind's decreeing, willing and approving the existence of wickedness, though it doeth nothing to accomplish it, discovers or makes it wicked. So if I could once believe that God did really decree and will the existence of sin, though at the same time he did nothing to accomplish this his decree, but concealed it from all his creatures—(as you say, his decretive will is secret) yet in that case, I should unavoidably think, what I almost fear to speak, viz. that the ever blessed God is the greatest lover of sin in the universe. And therefore I am sure, it is utterly impossible, that *God hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.* To all this, it was only answered, that the catechism was framed by godly ministers in England and established in this country by the Saybrook Platform; and that no part of it should be omitted. Mr. Beach engaged to comply. Accordingly, the next Sunday, the youth assembled during the intermission, as was cus-

tomary, to say their catechism. It so happened, (whether through design or not, I am not able to say) that the question was put to me—*What are the decrees of God?* I answered—*The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, whereby for his own glory, &c.** Here Mr. Beach interrupted, and began in a very mild and plain manner, to explain the answer. He had said but a few words, before some one asked him a question; and before he could answer, another question was proposed; and in a few moments, there was a violent altercation in the meeting house. Part held with Mr. Beach, and part with the Platform; the particulars of which I do not remember, and never have been able to learn. But during this dispute, Mr. Beach remained silent, till the uproar ceased; when, with his usual good nature and soft words, he addressed them briefly and affectionately, and thus restored quietness and harmony to the congregation. All things now proceeded peaceably for nearly a year—when Mr. Beach publicly informed his people from the pulpit 'that from a serious and prayerful examination of the scriptures, and of the writers in the earliest ages of the church; and from the universal acknowledgment of Episcopal government for 1500 years; compared with the recent establishment of presbyterian, and especially of congregational discipline in New-England; he was fully convinced of the invalidity of his ordination, and of the unscriptural method of organizing and governing congregations, and of admitting persons to the privileges of church-membership, as then practised.†

* See what is called the Westminster Catechism.

† The reader is requested seriously to enquire into the cause of changing the mode of baptismal admission into the church, for the modern practice of voting candidates into the fold of Chris., con-

And further, that extempore prayer, in Christian assemblies, was a novelty in the Christian Church. He, therefore, in the fear of Almighty God, had made up his mind to conform to the Church of England—a church which he considered apostolic in her ministry and discipline, orthodox in her principles, and primitive in her worship. He then, in a very affectionate manner, exhorted them to seriously weigh the subject, and promised to see that the sacraments should be duly administered among them until he could obtain holy orders; adding, that he should consider it his greatest happiness to live and die with them. The whole congregation was deeply affected; and a great proportion of them seemed to acquiesce in his determination."

Thus far was the writer informed by Mr. Blackman, whose narrative has been corroborated by his contemporaries of different denominations; and especially Mr. Nathan Sherman, a congregationalist, who lived to the great age of nearly an hundred years, and who was remarkable for his integrity and for a very retentive memory. From him, most of the foregoing facts were noted down many years ago.

To be continued.

To the Editors of the Churchman's Magazine.

GENTLEMEN,

I am a constant reader of your useful work; and am happy to assure you, that the sentiments and opinions which you propagate through its medium, generally meet

trary to all scripture authority and ancient experience: And he will be able to determine for himself, whether it originated in hostility to baptism, as the initiating seal of the covenant of grace—or in a love of novelty—or in a general settled opposition to apostolic usages.

with my entire approbation. But I have now taken up my pen to find a little fault; and I rely on your candour to give me a hearing.

I regret that your correspondent B. Y. should have undertaken to dispatch in a brief paragraph of twenty lines, (*Magazine for Jan. 1822, page 22*) the great controverted question, which has called forth the talents of some of the most able divines on both sides of the Atlantic, and which is still left involved in considerable difficulty.—This paragraph, to say the least of it, contains a very careless representation of the doctrine of the Church, on the subject of what is sometimes called *baptismal regeneration*; and admits of a construction, to which the Church does not hold, but which is contrary to the spirit and tenor, both of her articles and liturgy;—a construction, indeed, which I do not believe your correspondent himself would be willing to admit.

I have no idea of discussing the subject. This has been done by abler heads and abler hands: but I ardently wish that your correspondents, when they meddle with nice points in theology, would not employ terms so unguarded and so unqualified, as to lead to a misapprehension of their meaning.

LAYMAN.

For the Churchman's Magazine.

A Treatise upon Baptism.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

BAPTISM, considered as a sacrament of the new testament, ordained by Christ himself, as the only visible mode of admission into his church, must be altogether important, and highly obligatory. Any other view of it, would be a reflection upon the wisdom and authority

of him who appointed it. It is a condition of Church membership, and of grace and salvation, with which we have no right to dispense, and which cannot be neglected without manifest disobedience and danger.

If the necessity and importance of baptism be admitted, the due and proper administration of it must be equally necessary. The proper persons to administer this ordinance, I suppose it will be allowed, are those only who have been duly vested with the ministerial office. Hence it becomes an enquiry of the most serious consequence, what constitutes a regular and valid ministry, and who are the persons who are qualified and have authority to administer the ordinances of the gospel, the seals of the new covenant. It is not however my intention to pursue this enquiry at present; my object in the following pages will be to consider distinctly the sacrament of Baptism, and to enquire what is the proper mode of administering this ordinance, and who are the proper subjects of it.

In doing this I shall not claim the merit of much originality, for the subject has been so often and so amply investigated, that, by those who have attended to it, but little original information will be expected. My first enquiry is, what is the proper or scriptural mode of administering baptism?

There are two ways in which this ordinance is administered; one is immersion, or plunging the whole body into water; the other is affusion, that is pouring or sprinkling water upon the person. The advocates for immersion or plunging, strenuously contend that the ordinance can in no other way be validly administered. Those who practice a different mode, though they do not condemn immersion as improper, yet they argue that it is not necessary, that the quantity of water

does not give validity to the ordinance, that pouring or sprinkling is equally efficacious; and equally, if not more agreeable to scripture, and the nature and design of the ordinance.

Great stress is by some laid upon the word baptize or baptism, and they seem to think it necessarily implies immersion or plunging. But it is clear from several passages in the new testament, that the word is frequently used when only a partial washing is intended.

It is said (Luke xi. 37.) *A certain Pharisee asked Jesus to dine with him; and he went in and sat down to meat; and when the Pharisee saw it he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.* Not washed his whole body, but only his hands, according to the custom of the Jews, before they eat. Now this is expressed in the original by the same word which is translated baptized. And indeed, so far is the word from always meaning the being plunged in water, that the sufferings of our blessed Saviour are expressed by the same word. *"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."*

By a due attention to the uses of Baptism, further light is thrown upon the subject. One important design of it doubtless is, to represent the influences of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts. Christians are said to be born of water and of the spirit, and to be saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. And let it be remarked, the influences of the spirit represented in baptism are often expressed by pouring and sprinkling. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring. Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.* The pouring out of the Spirit is called being baptized

with it—*Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*, which was fulfilled on the day of pentecost.

Thus we see that pouring or sprinkling fitly represents the thing signified in baptism as it respects the influence of the Spirit.

Baptism also represents the forgiveness of sins. Hence the directions, *repent and be baptized, for the remission of sins—be baptized and wash away thy sins*. Our sins are indeed washed away in the blood of Christ, (of which baptism is the appointed medium or instrument) *He hath washed us from our sins in his own blood*.—And this application of Christ's blood is expressed by sprinkling.—*Ye are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling—Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit and sprinkling of the blood of Christ*.

The Apostle speaking of the Jews who came out of Egypt, says, *they were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea*. That this circumstance typically alluded to christian baptism, is more than probable, for in the close of the account he says, *these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition*. But how were the Israelites baptized in the cloud and in the sea? Not surely by being plunged in water, (for they went over dry shod;) but only by being sprinkled with some sprays from the sea, or some drops from the cloud.

To support the idea of the exclusive validity of baptism by immersion, much reliance has been placed upon the passage of scripture which says,—*We are buried with Christ in baptism—buried with him by baptism into death*. But the plain meaning of this appears to be, that by baptism we are bound to die to sin and to walk in newness of life,

in conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ. We might as well infer that the mode of baptism must resemble the crucifixion of Christ, as his burial, for, in the same passage, the Apostle says, *we are baptized into his death; our old man is crucified with him*. The baptism of Christ appears to have been his public inauguration into this ministry. The Prophet Isaiah foretells the anointing of Christ to preach the Gospel; and the Evangelist says, that after his baptism he began to preach, &c. So that his baptism was plainly the anointing foretold, and was probably performed after the same manner that anointing was, which was by pouring oil on the head. Nor is it any objection to this construction, that Christ is said to come up out of the water, for this does by no means necessarily imply that he was totally immersed in the water. It is also said that Philip and the Eunuch went down both into the water, and he baptized him, and they came up out of the water. Now if we must from these words necessarily understand that the Eunuch was covered with the water, we must also suppose that Philip was immersed as much as he, for they both went down into the water both Philip and the Eunuch, and they came up out of it. These expressions would be sufficiently justified if they only stepped within the margin of the water.

Again, it is said, *they were baptized of John in the river Jordan*: hence some have concluded that they were plunged in the river, but this is a construction by no means necessary. Christ said to the blind man whose eyes he had anointed with clay, *go wash in the pool of Siloam*; here the expression of washing in the pool, means no more than washing his eyes with the water of the pool: and with equal propriety John's hearers might be said to have been baptized in Jordan, if on-

ly some of the water of the river was poured or sprinkled upon them.

We read of three thousand baptized in only part of a day, at the feast of pentecost. That these were all baptized according to the present mode of plunging in so short a time can hardly be imagined, even admitting the whole twelve Apostles to have been engaged in it. When Cornelius and his friends received the gospel, Peter asks, not whether any man could hinder them from going to a fountain or river, but whether *any man could forbid water, that they should not be baptized.* We read of whole families baptized in their houses, particularly the jailor and his family, baptized at home and at midnight. And what I desire may be particularly remarked is, that we have no account of any persons going from the place where he was, in order to be baptized. Those who were baptized in streams and natural collections of water, were such as were found abroad, either in the wilderness or on the road when they first discovered their desire to be baptized.—I am not here contending that baptism by immersion is improper, or that it renders the ordinance invalid, but only that it is not necessary; that sprinkling is sufficient,—that it represents the things signified in baptism, equally well or better than plunging. Indeed it is irrational to suppose that it is the quantity of water, which gives validity to the ordinance, any more than the quantity of bread and wine to be used in the holy communion. Water cannot wash away sin; this is not pretended: but in baptism it represents our being washed in the blood of Christ, and sprinkled with the purifying influences of his grace and holy Spirit, of which water is a fit emblem, and for which purpose a small quantity only is necessary.

There is another argument which although I do not recollect to have

seen it urged by writers upon the subject, yet with me it has great weight in inducing me to believe that immersion is not necessary to a regular and valid baptism. The Christian religion was doubtless intended to be adapted to people in every country and climate; benevolence and mildness are its characteristics, and none of its institutions or ordinances were intended to be irksome or inconvenient. In a climate like ours, there is a considerable part of the year, in which, if it would not be dangerous, it would certainly be very inconvenient and burdensome, either to administer, or to receive baptism by immersion; and in case of bodily indisposition or sickness, the severity of the weather, would amount to an entire prohibition of the reception of the ordinance, and of course to an exclusion from its benefits. Numerous have been the instances of persons being very desirous to receive baptism, (and who have given the best evidence that they were duly qualified for it) under circumstances which, if immersion were absolutely necessary to its validity, must have remained without christian baptism,—without this seal of the new covenant, and consequently without any covenant title to the privileges and hopes of the Gospel. If the new testament contained any positive direction that baptism should be administered only by immersion or plunging, the preceding argument would be altogether nugatory. But when (as the present writer believes) the balance of the evidence is in favour of a different mode, and nearly excludes the idea that immersion is the only valid form in which the ordinance can be administered, arguments drawn from the mildness of the gospel dispensation, and the ease and satisfaction with which its requisitions may be complied with, are worthy of some consideration. Still it is urged by some, and urged with

much censoriousness, that no other mode of baptising but by immersion is valid, that no other way was practised or allowed by Christ and his Apostles. They have a right to their opinion upon the subject, but others also have a right to theirs. And to assert that all are in an unbaptized state and unfit for christian communion, because they do not see it necessary to follow them in that particular, seems to savour much of the spirit of those disciples who told our Saviour that *they saw one casting out devils in his name, and they forbade him, because he followed not with them.*

But, in matters of religion especially, uniformity and consistency are very desirable: and those who lay so great stress upon a particular mode of administering baptism, because they believe it to be agreeable to the example of the primitive church; ought perhaps, to consider whether *they* follow the example of Christ and his Apostles in other external forms and usages. I will mention but one circumstance; and I think myself justified in mentioning it in this case, when form is so much insisted upon. It is the form of kneeling in prayer. Now it will not be pretended but that this was the form—the posture of body in which our Saviour and the Apostles offered up prayers; nor have we any account that they ever prayed, either in public or private in any other posture. Yet those who so much insist upon what they suppose was the example of Christ in one case, find no difficulty in neglecting it in this. Kneeling in prayer is unquestionably the proper posture for the whole congregation, and seats ought always to be so constructed as to render it convenient. But the Minister especially, who offers up the prayers of the congregation, ought, at least, to set the example, in imitation of Christ and the primitive Church.

But, say they “it is but of small consequence whether we stand or kneel when we pray, if the heart be but sincere.” Then in this case it seems the form or manner is nothing. And suppose I should say that in receiving the ordinance of Baptism, it is but of little consequence whether we be plunged or sprinkled, if we are but proper subjects for that ordinance; a few drops answers the true intention of it as well as a fountain.

Now I suppose that prayer is as solemn, and as important a duty as baptism, and that it is as necessary that it should be rightly performed. But would not the present writer be considered very uncharitable if he were to assert that the prayers of those persons, and especially of those clergymen who do not kneel when they pray, according to the example of Christ and his Apostles, will be of no avail, that their prayers will not be heard or answered? But he has certainly as much reason to say this, as others have to say that without plunging no minister can confer, and no person receive a valid baptism. Nay, the case which I have mentioned is stronger, for no one disputes the position laid down with respect to prayer, but the other is only matter of opinion, for it never has yet been proved that either Christ or any of his disciples were baptized by immersion, or that ever any of the Apostles baptized any in that way, and it is nearly certain that they did not always do it, or consider it necessary to the validity of the ordinance.

Thus I have endeavoured to shew from scripture, from the nature of the ordinance, and from the things signified in, and represented by it, that affusion, that is, sprinkling or pouring is a proper mode in which to administer baptism, and probably the mode generally practised by the Apostles. I have shewn that the quantity of water could not reasonably be supposed to affect the validity

For the Churchman's Magazine,

An abstract of the Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, held in St. Paul's, Baltimore, June 20th, 21st, and 22d, 1821.

THIS Convention was attended by the Rt Rev. JAMES KEMP, D. D. Bishop of the Diocese, forty one clergymen, and about the same number of lay delegates.

The Bishop, agreeably to the Canon, delivered his annual address to the Convention, containing the journal of his Episcopal transactions for the last year; from which it appears, that "he administered the holy ordinance of confirmation fifteen times, at which 336 persons were confirmed; consecrated two new churches; appointed one lay reader; admitted four upon the list of candidates for Holy Orders; ordained two deacons, and eight priests."

After enumerating the several changes which had taken place, among the clergy of his diocese, since the last convention, the Bishop notices the death of the Rev. Mr. Jackson, in the following manner. "It may not be improper here to mention the death of the Rev. Mr. Joseph Jackson, many years a pious and useful minister of this Church. This gentleman while on a missionary tour in the Western country, died at Bardstown, in Kentucky, in the month of December last. His zeal and usefulness are manifest, by the effects produced in every parish where he lived: his piety is evidenced by the many devotional addresses, for particular occasions, and in consequence of particular events, found among his papers: and his strong attachment to the principles of our Church, and his anxiety for

ty of the ordinance, any more than the quantity of bread and wine to be received could affect the due administration of the communion; and that the form or manner in that case, could not be more important, than the manner or posture in which the great duty of prayer should be performed either by kneeling or standing.

Still the advocates for immersion are constantly urging that plunging is the only way in which baptism can be duly administered; and in a style sufficiently positive, challenge any one to shew an instance, in the new testament in which the ordinance was ever administered in any other way. If the present writer were disposed to copy their language, he might also, challenge any one to produce a single instance in all the scriptures, in which one was baptized by immersion, or plunging. This cannot be done with any certainty. The most that can be done is, to mention a few instances, in which the expressions seem to intimate that the ordinance was probably administered in that way. But we produce a great many more instances in which, from the language used, and the circumstances attending, there appears a probability, almost amounting to a certainty, that plunging was not the mode. And is it in a doubtful case, like this, that men will venture to be so positive, and I may add, so extremely censorious and uncharitable, as upon this single point to cut off from christian communion, nineteen twentieths, nay I may safely say, ninety-nine hundredths of the christian world?

(To be continued.)

her prosperity, are indelibly recorded by his will."

"The Prayer Book and Homily Society of Baltimore, have applied their means principally in disseminating the Book of Common Prayer, which unquestionably stands next to the Holy Bible: and it cannot be doubted, but, with the divine blessing, their exertions will be highly useful."

"The Female Episcopal Tract Society, go on with increased zeal and usefulness."

"The Sunday Schools continue to be conducted with great regularity and success."

In the conclusion of the Bishops address, there are some very judicious observations on the importance of zeal and activity among the laity, in promoting the temporal prosperity of the Church: and they are extracted with the hope that they may have an influence upon those laymen, to whom the concerns of our Churches are committed. Almost every thing connected with the temporal prosperity of our Churches, depends upon their prudence, zeal, activity and piety.

"To the gentlemen of the laity, I would beg leave to say, that the prosperity of the Church, and to a certain degree, her character depends greatly upon them. If they exert themselves to manage the temporal concerns in the best manner, so as to make a comfortable support for her clergy; to keep their churches and their chapels in good repair, and to encourage zealous and pious ministers, there can be no doubt, but she will prosper. From her Divine Head, grace will always flow to sanctify the exertions of her sincere members, and to render her the gate of Heaven to many a soul.

"You will be expected to stand foremost among the parishioners, for zeal, correct principles and piety. And if in these respects you may be justly viewed as placed on an emi-

nence, your light will shine all around, and you may be the happy instruments of preserving the integrity of the Church, and of leading, by your example, sinners to the fountain of mercy."

After an act, admitting a new parish lately organized in the city of Baltimore, into union with the Convention, the clergy made their parochial reports. These shew the churches generally, in that state, to be in a flourishing condition; the aggregate number of communicants being little short of three thousand, and the number of Baptisms, within the last year, more than a thousand.

This Convention received the reports of the vestries on the state of their parishes, glebes, &c. ordered to be made by the Convention of 1819. From these reports it appears that many of the parishes have glebes, or funds, and that in general their annual expenses are met by the avails of these funds, and subscriptions, or pew rents. The average amount of the salaries of their rectors, is not materially different from the amount received by rectors in other states.

The committee on the state of the Church, to whom these reports were submitted, recommend to the consideration of the Convention two or three subjects, which are intimately connected with the welfare of the Church. Their observations on these subjects are here extracted, not without hope that they may suggest to the several vestries in Connecticut, some useful alterations in their mode of raising funds to defray their annual expenses; and perhaps lead our convention to recommend some general system, which may tend, in some measure, to obviate the difficulties, which arise from the system of taxation, and the operation of the present constitution of this state.

"Among the evils," remark the committee, "to which the authority

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of the convention may possibly apply a partial remedy, *they present the scanty and precarious support provided for the rectors of parishes, as one which calls for the interposition of this body.* Subscriptions they consider as objectionable on many grounds. Instead of this mode of support, which is certainly the cause of the frequent removals of rectors, they request the convention to recommend to the several vestries of the diocese, the adoption of a different plan. In the city of Baltimore, and in some other places, the pews of the churches have been sold to the parishioners, subject to certain rents; and the holders, considering them as property acquired by purchase, have, hitherto, very generally paid the rents reserved. In two or three other parishes, the pews, though never sold, are rented from year to year, and have never failed to yield a tolerable support. If the plan of pew rents be adopted, the committee confidently expect more punctual payments, and a more permanent maintainance, than have yet been experienced by the clergy. It is not feared that much opposition will be made by any member of the Church, to a change recommended by the solemn vote of the convention. The present mode of raising support, having been tested for half a century, is universally acknowledged to be inadequate and insufficient."

The mode of raising parish funds by taxation is liable to many objections, and not much less incompatible with public feeling, than with the tendency of our state constitution, which, in its operation, in this respect, would seem to have been designed, if not to destroy the system of religious taxation, yet to facilitate those who might be disposed, no matter from what motives, to place themselves beyond its reach. In the present state of things, we conceive it to be necessary that our

churches should resort to some other mode of obtaining the funds to meet their annual expenses. Where endowments can be effected, this is unquestionably most desirable; for it places a parish at once on an independent and durable basis. But there are few parishes where this measure can be expected to take effect; yet something might be done in almost every parish, however depressed its condition, which would tend to give it permanency, and render its prospect for the future more encouraging. Of all the various modes, which may be annually resorted to to procure parish funds, we think that of pew rents, the most equitable, and the least liable to objections. It combines all the advantages of voluntary subscription, and avoids the odium of taxation. A difficulty may arise, with respect to the manner of assessing the rent of pews; and if it be arbitrary, inconveniences will probably result from it. There are two modes in which this difficulty may be avoided. Let the pew rents be averaged, and let the members of the parish give at auction premiums for a choice; or, if this should not be preferred, let the pews be sold for one or more years, for an annual rent, to be determined by the amount bid upon each separate pew at public sale. In several of our Churches, one or the other of these modes have been adopted, and with great success. And it is not known that in any instance, either of them has failed, or been attended with inconvenience. The parishes which raise their funds in this way, are now the most prosperous in the diocese. We feel a more than ordinary solicitude on this subject, from a persuasion, that the system of taxation, if persisted in under existing circumstances, will be attended with destructive consequences. The time has come when people will not, and cannot be compelled by law to pay for the support of

religion. The only means of obtaining parish funds which may be safely adopted, is that which will render not only the payment of *anything*, but the amount to be paid, perfectly voluntary.

The committee on the state of the Church mention another subject of very considerable importance, and one which has received but very little attention among the Churches in this state, and which, it is believed, is generally too much neglected by the Churches, throughout the country. "They express their strong regret at discovering so general a neglect throughout the diocese, of the establishment of parochial libraries. This measure they believe to be of vast importance, to the prosperity of the Church. They therefore request the Convention to enforce the order passed last year, and earnestly recommend to all rectors and vestrymen to exert themselves in effecting so desirable an object." It is unnecessary to urge on our readers the great importance of establishing parochial libraries, in our several parishes. The object may be accomplished without much difficulty, or individual expense, by the united and zealous exertions of a few persons. One great inconvenience experienced by the members of the Church, is the expense of obtaining doctrinal and practical treatises on religious subjects. This inconvenience would be removed by the establishment of parochial libraries, in which the members of the parish should have a common interest. The subject is deserving the consideration of our diocesan conventions. And with a view to give efficiency to the recommendations of the conventions; to facilitate the establishment of parochial libraries; and to save expense, in the purchase of books and otherwise; a library committee should be appointed in

each diocese, with such powers as would best enable them to accomplish the object of their appointment.

We are gratified to see that the Churches throughout the union are beginning to feel the importance of establishing an Episcopal fund in their respective dioceses, and that vigorous exertions are making in several states to accomplish an object which will add so much to the dignity and usefulness of the Episcopal office.

The Convention of Maryland took up this subject with great zeal, and have adopted a plan for obtaining an Episcopal fund, which promises, if followed by proper exertions, to result in the desired success. The report of their committee on this subject, is very able and interesting. They consider the establishment of this fund as an event, which would "contribute effectually to the welfare of the Church, and assist in placing her permanently on that respectable eminence, to which the purity of her faith, and the excellence of her services, so justly entitle her." After alluding to the advantages to be derived to the Church, by abstracting the Bishop from the cares incidental to the situation of parochial clergymen, they express their confidence, that, with the proper exertions, a fund, sufficient for the object contemplated, could be obtained in the diocese of Maryland, by the united and zealous exertions of all the clergy, and some of the influential members of their respective congregations.

The following notice of the progress which has been made in several dioceses in providing for the Episcopate, is extracted for the information of our readers.

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now yields an ample support for the Bishop,* and enables him to apply his time and his talents to his Episcopal functions. In Pennsylvania, collections for the support of a future Episcopate were begun in 1813, and the proceeds at this time amount to between six and seven thousand dollars, chiefly the produce of annual collections in their Churches in the cities. This, with a legacy of four thousand dollars bequeathed for the same purpose, places in possession of the Church in Pennsylvania, a sum of about twelve thousand dollars, which is continually increasing from the application of the accruing interest to the principal sum together with the amounts received from their annual collections. In New-York also, a sum has been raised, but in what manner is not exactly known to your committee. It is said however to be considerable, although not judged sufficient for immediate application to its design." Something has been done in the Eastern diocese, but the present amount is not known, though it is believed to be considerable. In turning our eyes from these laudable, and so far, successful exertions, and reviewing what has been done in the populous and wealthy diocese of Maryland, we cannot but regret that so little has been hitherto effected."

In expressing their hope that something towards accomplishing this desirable object will now be done, "and that we shall no longer

sleep over a subject so important to the best interests of the Church," the committee remark, what has often occurred to us, as deserving the imitation of Episcopalians "Other denominations of christians in supporting their peculiar institutions, afford us in their unanimity and perseverance, examples worthy of imitation. Why should Churchmen alone be backward in promoting the interests of their religion? Why should a church, whose members boast of her faith, her liturgy, and discipline, be suffered to languish, and through the lukewarmness of her children be denied those temporal advantages, which would enable her to extend the influence of her principles, and more widely to disseminate her doctrines?"

The committee on the Treasurer's account reported, "the amount of the Episcopate fund, including interest, to June 21st, 1821, to be \$752 58. And the deputies' fund, including interest to the same date, to be \$372 32."

This Committee also reported a small balance in the hands of the Secretary, for defraying the incidental expenses of the convention.

The Committee appointed to collect the contributions from the several parishes. received for the Bishop's expenses \$376 34, for the Deputies' fund \$141, and for the incidental expenses of the Convention \$98.

A resolution was adopted, "requiring each parish in the diocese, to pay \$1, annually, for defraying the expenses of the several publications ordered by the Convention." These publications are always interesting and useful, and it is often desirable to distribute them free of expense. No provision has yet been made in Connecticut, for meeting this expense. For several years past, these publications have been at the expense of the Society for promoting christian knowledge. The funds of

* Most devoutly do we wish that this was the case. We suppose the committee fell into the good natured mistake, of concluding that *all* our parishes had paid the amount of their assessments, and that there were not at this moment, \$9809,27 out of the \$17149, due to the Bishop's Fund. They doubtless thought it a very improbable thing, that of the 25 parishes in this State of Connecticut, THIRTY NINE should have never paid a farthing towards the permanent support of their chief overseer. But they were mistaken after all.

this society are too small for the accomplishment of its specific purposes, and the propriety of diverting its funds to any other purposes, is at least questionable. We think that the wisdom of the convention ought to devise some other means for meeting the expense of its publications : at any rate, as patrons of the society, we must be permitted to express our unwillingness that its funds should be applied to defray expenses, which are incurred by the Convention ; and we earnestly hope that this measure will not be resorted to again, certainly not until the funds of the Society become more ample.

A resolution was also passed, authorizing the Treasurer of the Convention to pay out of the deputies' fund the travelling expenses of the standing committee.

"The business of the Convention being then accomplished, the Bishop declared his approbation of the manner in which it had been transacted ; and his great satisfaction in the harmony which had so apparently prevailed. Among other remarks, he took occasion to express his wish, that the clergy of this diocese would conform, at the opening of Conventions, to the ancient and decorous usage of the Church, in respect of the appearance of clergymen in their robes, upon all occasions of public religious solemnity."



Survey of Missionary Stations.

(CONTINUED.)

WATERLOO.

A Town of Liberated Negroes and disbanded African Soldiers, in the Parish of St. Michael—Inhabitants, 353.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1820.

John Godfrey Wilhelm, *Minister*.
Mrs. Wilhelm, *Schoolmistress*.

About half the population were disbanded soldiers and their families. These men were at first unruly and profane ; but Mr. Wilhelm went amongst them in the midst of their revels ; and by a due mixture of authority and affection, succeeded in reducing them to better order. Public Worship and Prayer-meetings were better attended. One of the Soldiers, an established and consistent Christian, has a number of promising Natives under his care. Scholars 86. Mr. Wilhelm is engaged in translating the Scriptures into Susoo.

HASTINGS.

A Town of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. Thomas---Inhabitants, 195.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1820.

This Town is under the care of Mr. Wilhelm. The Negroes are as yet very ignorant, and little acquainted with English : 57 are in the Schools.

KENT.

A Town of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. Edward, at Cape Shilling---Inhabitants, 296.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1819.

Wm. Randle, *Superintendent*.
Mrs. Randle, *Schoolmistress*.

This is an important station, and the most distant from Freetown. There are several villages in its vicinity. The Slave Trade is still carried on in the neighbourhood, and Slaves sometimes escape, and take refuge here.

Many attend Public worship. A large building is in preparation, 72 feet by 48, the first floor of which will be appropriated to Divine Worship. Scholars 77, besides those who attend the Evening Schools.

CHARLOTTE.

A Town of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. John---Inhabitants, 268.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1819.

Christopher Taylor, *Schoolmaster*.
Mrs. Taylor, *Schoolmistress*.

About 200 attend Public Worship, which is held thrice every Sunday, besides Morning and evening Prayer. Scholars, 106. The moral improvement in this Town is said to be very rapid.

LEOPOLD.

A Town of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. Peter---Inhabitants, 469.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1818.

Melchior Renner, *Minister*.
Mrs. Renner, *Schoolmistress*.
William Allen, *Native Assistant*.
John Ellis, *Native Usher*.
Mary Hickson, *Native Assistant*.

Scholars, 144.—The Scriptures are explained to the people, Morning and Evening, and four times on Sunday. Communicants 36. The prospect is very promising, particularly amongst the young.

A Missionary Association has been lately formed amongst them, at which, some of the Liberated Negroes spoke with much feeling.

REGENT'S TOWN.

A Town of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. Charles---Inhabitants, 1218 ---laid out with regularity---surrounded with good roads---has a large stone Church, with many other Public Buildings, and the whole place rapidly advancing in civilization.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1816.

W. A. B. Johnson, *Minister*.
James Lisk, *Schoolmaster*.

Mrs. Lisk, and Hannah Johnson,
Schoolmistresses.

W. Tamba, W. Davis, David Noah,
Native Teachers.

This Town is the most healthy and flourishing of any in the Colony, and the advances which have been made in Christian knowledge and piety by the inhabitants, are of the most encouraging character. Mr. Johnson seems to have completely won the affections of the people, and to have used his influence to the best of all purposes. The Communicants attached to his church, were about 300; 80 have applied for baptism, of whom 36 had been admitted as Candidates, and others remained to be examined—The whole of the Inhabitants are in the habit of attending Public Worship, two or three families excepted, who live at a distance, and follow their country-fashions.

The crowded state of the Congregations will appear from the simple expression of the Native Warden; who, long before the bell rang, came to Mr. Johnson—"Massa, the Church full, and plenty people live outside, and cannot come in! What must I do with them?" Let some who "profess and call themselves Christians," think of these facts.

432 Scholars were under instruction in the Schools, and in the Christian Institution, and the number increasing.

One large stone School House, 73 feet by 30, including a Piazza, is already finished for the Girls; and another of the same size for the Boys, is in forwardness.

The Native Teachers are highly useful to Mr. Johnson, in the Schools, in visiting the sick, and their countrymen in the neighbouring hamlets.

Much has been done in cultivation. Large quantities of Cassada are raised for home consumption and exportation: the usual sale of which

has been 660 bushels pr. week.

Mr. Johnson writes, "notwithstanding the unhealthiness of the climate, I can assure you, that the longer I am here the more I like to be here; for the Lord Jesus, who is our Shepherd, is with us."

The *Christian Institution* is a School of a higher order, intended to prepare the most promising of the Natives to become Missionaries and Teachers amongst their countrymen. The present number of Scholars is 26.

LEICESTER.

A Hamlet of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. Andrews---Inhabitants, 73.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1814.

This was formerly the seat of the Christian Institution. The larger building which was then attached to it, is now converted into a Hospital for Liberated Negroes. The people of the hamlet are principally under the care of W. Tamba and W. Davis, who visit them every day.

GLOUCESTER.

A Town of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. Andrew---Inhabitants, 563.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1816.

Henry During, *Minister*.
Mrs. During, *Schoolmistress*.

Communicants, 36—Scholars, 258, Adults and Children. Mr. D. writes, that the desire of learning to read the Scriptures is great. Almost daily application is made for copies. "Between the Services on Sundays," says he, I see the Negroes, in small Congregations, scattered here and there, reading the Scriptures among themselves. I also see the same on Week Days, after hard

labour, and after the Evening School."

The Negroes have formed a Missionary Association, and collected the year the sum of Eleven Guineas.

WILBERFORCE.

A town of Liberated Negroes, in the Parish of St. Paul---Inhabitants, 409.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1817.

Henry Charles Decker, *Minister*.

About 20 Adults have been Baptized.—Scholars, 81. A change for the better is taking place among the inhabitants, although Mr. D. had much labour under many discouragements from their attachment to their old superstitions.

We have now completed our Survey of Missionary Stations in Western Africa—We shall next give some account of those in the Southern part of that Continent.

(To be continued.)



We are gratified to learn from various quarters, that Church principles are making so good a progress in the State of Vermont. It is but a few years since they obtained a footing in that part of the country; and they now appear to be spreading with a rapidity which nothing can counteract, but the want of ministers, which indeed is an evil experienced in a greater or less degree in every Diocese in the Union. A new Church has been lately erected in Manchester, in Vermont, and was consecrated on the 17th of October last, to the service of Almighty God, by the name of Zion Church—services performed by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Griswold, some of the neighbouring Clergy being present and assisting.